



## Navy Plans To Discontinue Training on Vieques in 2003, SECNAV Seeks Alternatives

By Jerome Mapp and Journalist 1st Class Joseph Gunder, Navy News Service

WASHINGTON (NNS) — In a June 15 Pentagon press conference, Secretary of the Navy Gordon England announced that the Navy is actively planning to discontinue all training exercises on the Puerto Rican island of Vieques in May of 2003.

England has also stated that the Department will seek legislative relief from the current requirement to conduct a referendum on Navy training at Vieques. That referendum is currently scheduled for November 6 of this year.

An outside panel of experts will be created to reinvigorate efforts to

identify alternatives to conduct effective training. The panel will consist of active-duty and retired military experts, along with civilian technicians.

"I want to emphasize that I brought this proposal forward within the DoD and to the White House," England said. "I believe that this approach best reduces what I consider to be the greatest risk to the Navy — to our Sailors and Marines — which would be to lose the ability to continue critical training on Vieques for the next two years while we seek alternatives."

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The Honorable Gordon R. England, Secretary of the Navy, addresses the press in the Pentagon on his decision to look for training alternatives to the Island of Vieques. Photo by Chief Photographer's Mate Dolores L. Parlato

## SURFLANT Increases Reenlistment Rates

By Naval Surface Force Atlantic Fleet Public Affairs

NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) — "We are in a war, a war for people," said Rear Adm. Jay Foley, commander, Naval Surface Force Atlantic Fleet (SURFLANT).

For the past several years the American economy has made the option of moving out instead of up a viable option for more and more Sailors, so the war is a fight to keep the most valuable asset in the Navy's arsenal: people.

SURFLANT is seeing some hard-won gains since it went on the offensive in this war.

In fact, SURFLANT leads

the way in reenlistment rates for Zones B, C and D for the 12-month period ending April 30 with rates of 70.3 percent, 87.9 percent and 98.0 percent. Those rates are higher than the Navy and Atlantic Fleet averages. Zone B represents Sailors with between six and 10 years of service, Zone C Sailors have between 10 and 14 years of service and Zone D Sailors have 14-plus years of service, not to exceed 20 years.

The retention offensive has included a number of innovative strategies. SURFLANT units can share their retention strategies via

the Force Career Counselor's Web site at [www.cnsi.spear.navy.mil/N0/N02c/index.htm](http://www.cnsi.spear.navy.mil/N0/N02c/index.htm).

One ship that has shared its ideas with the fleet is the Mayport-based guided missile destroyer USS *Carney* (DDG 64). The chief petty officers' mess hosts introductory investment classes for Sailors.

"You would be surprised how many Sailors' eyes open real wide when they see how easy it is to start an IRA (individual retirement account) and how the profits balloon over a period of time," said Master Chief Operations

Specialist(SW) Scott Williams, *Carney's* command master chief. "The theme of that training is to let Sailors realize they can earn two retirement payments each month. One payment from their military service, and one from money they have available once their IRAs mature."

During the past year, *Carney's* first-term reenlistment rate has nearly tripled rising to 45 percent.

Helping Sailors look at the financial options is a recurring theme among retention teams

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# DCNP Believes in “Total Force” Navy

By Naval Reserve Force Public Affairs

NEW ORLEANS (NNS) — Manpower and retaining qualified personnel are top priorities for both the active-duty Navy and the Naval Reserve Force, according to Rear Adm. Gerald L. Hoewing, deputy Chief of Naval Personnel and commander, Navy Personnel Command (NPC) in Millington, Tenn. He sees an integral tie between the active and Reserve forces.

“I am a total force person,” said Hoewing. “Our Naval Reserve forces provide wonderful support for the active-duty Navy, and I believe there are plenty of opportunities to improve that in the future.”

In its mission to provide capable units and individuals to the Navy and Marine Corps team, the Naval Reserve must maintain the same exacting standards as

their active-duty counterparts.

“I observed Reserve units supporting the USS *John F. Kennedy* (CV 67) Battle Group and there was great synergy between the active-duty and Reserve Sailors,” said Hoewing. “They would even call and talk to each other before drill weekend to go over the work list and make sure they’re working together as a team.”

Hoewing added, “That is the definition of how our Reserve forces help the active-duty Navy and why we work very closely with them.”

But manpower continues to be a great challenge for both forces, and is the number one priority of the Chief of Naval Operations. It is also Hoewing’s top priority.

“The Navy’s retention goal is having the right number of quality Sailors to

properly man the United States Navy,” Hoewing said. “Our number one priority here at NPC in supporting the CNO’s top priority, manpower, is improving retention and reducing attrition. In the last year we’ve set up several projects throughout NPC to do that.”

The Navy’s retention strategy consists of five themes:

- leading Sailors to achieve success,
- empowering Sailors to make informed career decisions,
- providing for the professional and personal development needs of Sailors and their families,
- providing retention teams with the tools needed to do the job,
- and evaluating Navy policies to

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throughout the Atlantic Fleet surface force.

On board the Norfolk-based guided missile cruiser USS *Monterey* (CG 61), Sailors are required to watch the PBS documentary “Surviving The Good Times,” which follows two blue-collar families through the past 10 years and the economic challenges they face. The ship also uses first class petty officers and chiefs with homes, families and investment portfolios as examples of how Sailors can succeed on a military salary.

“We work hard at defining reality,” said *Monterey*’s commanding officer Capt. Bill Walsh. “That is, the Navy has opportunities and benefits superior to most of the civil sector and we’ve come up with quite a few programs to help make that point.”

In the past year, *Monterey*’s first-term reenlistment rate has more than doubled to 65 percent.

On board the Norfolk-based guided missile destroyer USS *Barry* (DDG 52), Cmdr. Perry Bingham, the ship’s commanding officer, puts a personal touch on the retention program, inviting Sailors at career decision points to lunch with him in his stateroom.

“My goal isn’t to put them in a

headlock or anything,” Bingham said. “I just want to find out if they have a plan. If they do, fine. If they don’t, then I want them to know I can help. I’m not at all afraid to pick up the phone and bend the ear of a detailer if it will help get a good Sailor a good set of orders.”

Bingham believes the payoff from a proactive retention program is in positive morale for the crew, which they take with them when they transfer.

“Having the facts, freedom of choice and a wide range of options helps Sailors make clearer decisions that have long-term benefits for them, their ship and the Navy,” Bingham added.

*Barry*’s first-term reenlistment numbers doubled to 60 percent over the past year.

Foley believes philosophies like those on *Carney*, *Monterey*, *Barry* and others are how the Navy will retain more of its Sailors.

“Retention is an important, ongoing process,” Foley explained. “It’s not something that you think of when a Sailor or officer is considering leaving. It’s everything we do for our people from the time they put on a uniform to the day they leave the service.

Foley added, “We have to fight to keep our people — each and every Sailor — one at a time. They are the cornerstones of operational excellence.”

Foley believes that with good, satisfied Sailors, ships’ successes are enabled.

A motivated crew has a significant, positive and obvious impact on command climate, which almost always results in increased combat readiness and material condition.

With that in mind, Foley believes the Navy can retain more good people by building good people and then convincing them to stay.

“Does all this good news mean the war is over? Far from it,” Foley said. “We’re scoring some victories, but we have to remain vigilant.”

For fleet-wide best practices information, commands are encouraged to use the popular “Stay Navy” Web site sponsored by Navy Personnel Command’s Center for Career Development at **www.staynavy.navy.mil**. Just select “CO’s Corner” for the latest information on innovative approaches to successful retention programs in practice throughout the fleet.

# Advisory Panel Proposes Personnel Changes

By Army Sgt. 1st Class Kathleen T. Rhem, American Forces Press Service

WASHINGTON (NNS) — The American public holds the military in high regard, but “the propensity to serve is very low,” a high-level Pentagon adviser said June 13.

Retired Adm. David Jeremiah, a former vice chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, told reporters that the military needs a personnel system designed for “changing demographics” and better pay for mid-grade enlisted members to deal with the issue.

Jeremiah led a far-reaching review of quality of life and morale issues at the request of Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld. He briefly went over the panel’s more than 60 recommendations during the Pentagon briefing.

Jeremiah said the military has a personnel system with “no real structure, no strategy that deals with human resources in the (Defense) Department across the board, not just military but civilians and contractors as well.”

“What you have is a system that is basically 50 years old and has been ‘band-aided’ over the years to accommodate different stresses and strains on it,” Jeremiah said.

The current up-or-out system “works OK, ... but doesn’t necessarily recognize the individual needs of the services,” Jeremiah continued.

Jeremiah believes that more flexible retirement systems, including allowing certain career fields to get some retirement benefits before 20 years and not forcing others out at 30 years, might be smart ways to do business.

“We need to know what kinds of skills and experience

we’re going to need for our transformed force. We may not want a 60-year-old infantryman, but I’d be happy to have a 60-year-old information warrior,” Jeremiah said. “He or she probably has 15 or 20 years of experience in the business, knows how to do it, knows all the tricks of the trade.”

“There are different needs out there,” Jeremiah said. “The one-size-fits-all doesn’t work any more.”

Jeremiah called a flexible retirement system “the most fundamental” recommendation to come out of his panel’s review.

The QOL study is just one of what have come to be called “the Rumsfeld Reviews.” It was begun to stimulate the secretary’s thinking on the myriad issues relating to quality of life and morale.

Higher education levels in the enlisted force have made the pay gap for mid-level enlisted grades larger than the gap for other grades, Jeremiah said. He noted that nearly 80 percent of enlisted members have “some college” by the time they’ve been in the service 10 years.

“We find now many enlisted people with more than one bachelor’s degree or

master’s degrees,” Jeremiah said. “So it’s a different force than the high school graduates — if we were lucky and ahead of the sheriff — that we got 50 years ago.”

Jeremiah said the gap is a result of the Department of Defense paying these ranks on the assumption they are high-school grads only, not individuals with some college or with college degrees.

He recommended that President Bush’s recent pledge of \$1.4 billion more in military pay raises be targeted to mid-

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## A Sledding We Will Go



An MH-53E "Sea Dragon" attached to Helicopter Mine Countermeasures Squadron (HM) 15 pulls an MK-105 sled during a mine countermeasures exercise in the South China Sea. Hosted by Singapore, the exercise is the first Western Pacific Mine Countermeasures Exercise (MCMEX) and includes participants from 14 countries, including the United States.

Photo by Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Aaron L. Lane

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determine their impact on retention.

The Center for Career Development (CCD) at NPC provides the fleet with the tools necessary to help keep the Navy's high-quality Sailors in uniform.

Its focus is bringing new energy and new initiatives to the fleet, and getting "best practices" information for improving retention and decreasing attrition throughout the Navy.

"The best practices messages that the Chief of Naval Personnel sends to the fleet were created from our CCD and detailer visits," said Hoewing. "We go out and talk to Sailors and they ask questions, and we go out and talk to commands and they tell us what their best practices are for reducing attrition, and we pass what we have learned to the rest of the Navy."

One example of a best practice is the efforts of USS *Constellation* (CV 64), which conducts a thorough professional development board (PDB) on every Sailor who checks aboard in the first two weeks.

"During the PDB, the command examines a Sailor's record for weaknesses — including training and qualifications programs to get him or her qualified for enlisted surface/air warfare specialist, and helps the Sailor step down the path to success by developing a personalized training and qualification plan — we call it 'personalization of leadership,'" Hoewing explained.

Another best practice is acknowledging major milestones in a Sailor's career, such as promotions or awards, where the commanding officer sends a personal letter to the Sailor's family congratulating them on how well the Sailor is doing.

"On some ships the command master chief actually calls the parents or the spouse just to let them know that their son or daughter has checked aboard and that they're going to take good care of them," said Hoewing. "This establishes a link to the family and personalizes the arrival of the Sailor to the team."

Establishment of CCD is also part of the Navy's continuing efforts to improve Sailors' quality of service — the balance between quality of life and quality of work.

One tool that helps gather feedback

from the field is site visits.

CCD and detailer traveling teams visit Navy installations to present career decision workshops for Sailors and their families, conduct professional training for Navy career counselors and command retention teams, and present best practices briefs to local Navy leadership.

"When we go to these active-duty installations, we try to include the Reserve component contingents," said Hoewing. "We tailor our visits to the commands



we're visiting and include key people from Pers-9, as well as some of our TAR (training and administration of Reserves) detailers, giving Reservists the opportunity to hear these ideas and best practices."

The Detailer Communications Program is one more important step in the retention process.

According to Hoewing, the Navy needs to reach out and touch Sailors earlier in their decision process. If Sailors do decide to leave the Navy, he wants them to be supporters of the Navy, and become good citizens and good recruiters when they return to their communities.

"We also want them to retain some ties with the Navy, and we encourage them to become members of the Naval Reserve so that they can keep their career aspirations going," Hoewing added. "The Reserves keep their opportunities to come back into the active-duty Navy alive and well, and most importantly, keep

important skills within our reach in time of emergency or contributory support. So we work very closely with the Reserve force."

In an effort to enhance command retention programs and improve the quality of service for all Sailors, the Navy in November 2000 announced a fleet-wide retention/attrition stand down and directed all commands to review the effectiveness of their retention programs.

Part of the stand down included the video feature, "The First 72 Hours," which shows how important it is to treat Sailors right when they report to a new command.

"Having the 'right' Sailor as a sponsor means leading and mentoring by a very positive influence," said Hoewing. "Presenting a positive first impression has tremendous value that may ultimately be measured in each Sailor's future decision to reenlist."

Another measurement tool that is being used at key career points to find out why Sailors decide to leave or stay is the ARGUS survey.

Used by both the active-duty and Reserve forces, the ARGUS survey is a Web-based questionnaire system used to collect specific data from Sailors on retention influences at major career milestones, such as reenlistment, advancement, permanent change of station and separation.

"The first to do this survey was the Reserve community — they call it the career decision survey — and we've learned a lot of lessons from it," Hoewing said.

Some of the career influences addressed in the questionnaire include quality of service, leadership, job satisfaction, civilian industry employment, pay, compensation and benefits, educational opportunities, and personal and family life and housing.

"ARGUS will be the only survey ongoing 365 days a year, and we hope that it will be an enabler to help Navy leadership make good retention decisions," Hoewing added.

The second phase of ARGUS will be a compact disc version for those who don't have access to the Internet.

To find out more about the CCD, the ARGUS Career Transition Questionnaire and other initiatives, visit the CCD web site at [www.staynavy.navy.mil](http://www.staynavy.navy.mil).



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He added that the two-year timetable to leave Vieques is "challenging, but it is reasonable and achievable."

England emphasized that the level of emotion involved distracts from the real issue, which is "providing effective training for naval forces."

As the clock ticks on the balance of the Navy's time in Vieques, the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* (CVN 71) Battle Group is beginning a new round of exercises. The battle group includes more than 10,000 Sailors and Marines aboard 11 ships.

England stressed that the Navy will continue to use the range facilities on Vieques until May of 2003, in accordance with the currently accepted restrictions on live fire and usage rates.

"There is no viable 'near-term' alternative to the facilities at Vieques," England added.

The Navy has operated on the Caribbean island since 1941. The Navy bought two-thirds of Vieques as a staging area in World War II, but earlier this year returned one-third of the island to the municipal government on Vieques.

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grade enlisted service members.

Excess bases make upkeep nearly impossible. The solution: fewer bases and a commitment to maintain the ones we keep, according to Jeremiah. He believes that old workspaces in disrepair hurt morale and make people in the military wonder what the country thinks of them. The study also recognized the face of the military is changing.

Jeremiah said some estimates see the military being much more heavily Hispanic in coming years and that DoD should work to recruit these individuals now so there can be more Hispanic leaders in future years.

High operations tempo and the increased use of Guard and Reserve forces were also noted as quality of life problem areas.

"This is a world in which we're not at war and we're not at peace," Jeremiah said. "The peace that we're in is the absence of major war, but it isn't peace as we know it, and it demands an enormous amount of activity on the part of the military members in the force."

"Housing is one area where DoD can make significant improvements in a relatively short amount of time and the department should do just that," Jeremiah stressed. "The military needs better housing sooner."

**This Week on Navy/Marine Corps News**

Look for the following stories and more on next week's Navy/Marine Corps News show:

- Navy Secretary Gordon England announces that military exercises and aerial bombings on Vieques Island will come to an end in 2003;

- Marines and Sailors at Camp Pendleton take on mountains and rough terrain in the Assault Climber Course;

- Korean War veterans finally get the chance to thank the Navy nurses who helped them survive the war;

- While one Navy twin gets his commission, his brother gets reenlisted.

Compiled on tape #2001-26, the show is on its way to the fleet now.

**This Week in Naval History:**

- June 25, 1950: The Korean War begins when the Communist North Korean army, supported by the Soviet Union, invades the Republic of Korea. Two days later, President Harry S. Truman authorizes Army Gen. Douglas MacArthur, commander in chief, Far East, to use U.S. air and naval forces in support of South Korea.

- June 26, 1918: In a fierce pitched battle at Belleau Wood, France, the 4th Marine Brigade defeats the Germans and halts their final major offensive of World War I. Because of the Marines' ferocity in battle, the Germans refer to them as "Teufelhunde," or Devil Dogs.

- June 27, 1861: Commander James H. Ward becomes the first naval officer killed in the Civil War. During naval action on the Potomac River, Ward was attempting to cover the withdrawal of a small federal force at Mathias Point, Va., when he was mortally wounded by gunfire from a Confederate sniper. He died shortly thereafter.

- June 28, 1987: General Alfred M. Gray becomes the 29th commandant of the Marine Corps. He is the first enlisted Marine to scale the ranks from private to four-star general.

- June 29, 1990: Admiral Frank Kelso II succeeds Adm. Carlisle A.H. Trost as the 24th Chief of Naval Operations. As commander of the U.S. 6th Fleet in the Mediterranean, Kelso directed the interception of an airliner carrying Palestinian terrorists in 1985. The terrorists had hijacked the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* and murdered an American tourist.

- June 30, 1815: During the last naval action of the War of 1812, the sloop USS *Peacock* forces the surrender of HMS *Nautilus*. The British vessel suffers six men killed and eight wounded.

- July 1, 1911: The first aircraft built for the Navy, the A-1 Triad Hydroaeroplane, takes off from and lands on Lake Keuka at Hammondsport, N.Y. The pilot, Glenn Curtiss, flew the aircraft for five minutes at an altitude of 25 feet.

Visit the Naval Historical Center web site at [www.history.navy.mil](http://www.history.navy.mil) for more information about naval history.

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